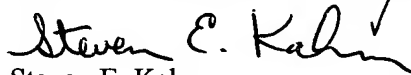


attach a rope around the tree at the top of each section of the ladder. The rope extends from the top of the section around the tree to the top of the same section and is secured by wrapping the rope around a binder pivotally connected to the ladder. In the new claims presented by the applicant a first strap is attached at the top of a top section on a first stile and a second strap is attached at the top of the top section on the second stile. The straps wrap around the tree and are hooked to the opposite stiles on the ladder at the bottom section and pulled tight by a strap-tightening device in the length of the strap near the bottom hook. Thus the user does not have to climb on an unstable ladder to hook the stabilizing straps thereto. The hooking of the bottom end of the strap to the ladder and then tightening the straps by a strap tightening means in the length of the strap is a unique feature. Morris shows a binder attached to the stiles for securing a rope. The features as now claimed are not found in the Morris patent and are therefore believed to be allowable over the reference.

The applicant is also correcting a typographical error found on page 6 last paragraph second line where "an strap" is being changed to "a strap".

Respectfully submitted,

NIKOLAI & MERSEREAU, P.A.



Steven E. Kahm

Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 30860

900 Second Avenue South

Suite 820

Minneapolis, MN 55402

Phone: 612-339-7461

April 28, 2003

IN THE SPECIFICATION

✓
Page 6 last paragraph on the page bridging to page 7.

B
As illustrated in the views, which illustrate a preferred method of attachment, strap 11a, is secured to ~~an~~ a strap receiving ring 17 on stile 14 of uppermost stile section 12a, passes behind the vertical V member and is secured to the lowermost strap receiving ring 17 provided on stile 13 of the lowermost stile section 12c. Strap 11b similarly is secured to strap receiving ring 17 on stile 13 of uppermost stile section 12a passes behind the vertical V member and is secured to the lowermost strap receiving ring 17 provided on stile 14 of the lowermost stile section 12c. In this manner, the straps 11a, 11b cross behind the vertical V member. The straps 11a, 11b could also be secured about a limb or protrusion of the tree or otherwise attached thereto. Strap tightening devices 11d, 11e provide for tightening of the straps 11a, 11b to secure the ladder 10 to the vertical V member.

CLAIMS

Claims 1-12. Canceled

13. (new) A ladder for climbing adjacent a generally vertical member comprising:

a first stile and a laterally spaced second stile, both stiles longitudinally extended and serving as side elements,

a plurality of laterally extending rungs secured at their ends to the stiles and spaced therealong, to form ladder segments,

a standoff on one side of the stiles to abut with the vertical member and position the stiles and rungs a predetermined distance from the vertical member,

a connector for connecting adjacent stiles vertically such that the ladder segments are added together to extend the ladder,

a ring near the top of each stile,

a strap with a first hook and at a first end of the strap engaging the highest ring of the first stile, the strap going around the vertical member, a second hook at the second end of the strap engaging the lowest ring of the second stile such that the strap secures the ladder to the vertical object, at a first end of the a second strap engaging the highest ring of the second stile, the second strap going around the vertical member, a second hook at the second end of the second strap engaging the lowest ring of the first stile such that the strap secures the ladder to the vertical object,

a strap length adjustment means, on the length of the strap near the bottom ring, for adjusting the length of the straps and tightening the straps to secure to the ladder to the vertical object, wherein the straps are connected to the highest rings then the ladder is placed

against the vertical object and then to the lowest rings after the ladder is placed against the vertical object and tightened such that the user need not climb the ladder to secure the ladder to the vertical object.

14. (new) A ladder for climbing adjacent a generally vertical member as in claim 13 wherein, a third strap having a first hook and a means for adjusting the length of the strap and a second hook, secures the ladder to the vertical member by the first hook engaging a ring on the first stile and a the second hook engaging a ring on the second stile at the same height as the first hook, and then tightening the strap.

15. (new) A method of securing a ladder to a tree or other vertical object comprising, providing a plurality of ladder sections each having a first stile and a second stile with rungs therebetween and stand off means attached thereto, attaching the ladder sections to each other vertically to extend the height of the ladder, attaching a strap having a length adjustment mechanism, to the top section of the ladder on each stile, placing the ladder against a vertical object with the stand off means separating the vertical object from the stiles, running the straps from the stiles at the top of the ladder around the vertical object to the opposite stile and attaching the straps to the bottom section of the ladder, with the length adjusting mechanism near the bottom section, shortening the length of the straps with the length adjusting mechanism to secure the ladder against the vertical object.

16. (new) A method of securing a ladder to a tree or other vertical object as in claim 15

including the further step of,

extending a strap at uniform height from the first stile around the vertical object to the second stile and tightening the strap to secure the ladder to the vertical object.

B2
C11d